

Plan Basics



Above: Large lot estates characterize much of the Planning Area.

Introduction

This chapter of the Huebner/Leon Creeks Community Plan provides information about the planning area, its boundaries, how the plan was initiated, the plan drafting process utilizing citizen input, plan outreach and the implications of recognition of the plan by the City of San Antonio.

Huebner/Leon Creeks Community Plan

Plan Basics

The Huebner/Leon Creeks Community Plan is a partnership effort of the Alamo Farmsteads, Country View, Country View Village, Eckhert Crossing, French Creek Village, Lincoln Green, Lincoln Park, Lochwood, Lost Oaks, Marshall Meadows, Oak Bluff, Pembroke Estates, Pembroke Farms, Pembroke Forest, Pembroke Village, Verde Hills, Wellesley Manor, Westchase Village, Westfield, Whisper Creek, Wildwood One Neighborhoods and the City of San Antonio Planning Department. The plan is the result of nearly a year of hard work by the Planning Team and other active residents and business people.

Plan Boundaries

The planning area is bound by Prue Road to the north; Babcock Road to the east; Huebner Road and the City of Leon Valley to the south and Bandera Road to the west.



Planning Area Map

The wide rights of way and relatively high vehicular speeds characterized by Bandera, Huebner and Babcock Roads provide a demarcation between the planning area and neighborhoods to the west, south and east.

To the north, Prue Road is a narrow but heavily trafficked thoroughfare that bisects the Westfield Neighborhood. For approximately one-half mile the planning area boundary extends to the north of Prue Road to include all of the Westfield Neighborhood.

Major community landmarks include the Leon Creek Greenway, O.P. Schnabel Park, Thornton Elementary School, Rudder Middle School and the Alamo Golf Club. Significant tracts of vacant, unplatted land can still be found in the planning area and offer an opportunity for the Community to guide growth to provide for a better future.

Why create a plan?

Developed by neighbors, businesses, neighborhood associations, community organizations, religious institutions, schools, developers, investors, and other interested groups, the

Huebner/Leon Creeks Community Plan is a blueprint for action. By setting goals, objectives and action steps, the community stakeholders create a vision and identify the steps needed to reach their goals. This plan organizes many of the community's ideas into a single document that can be shared with residents, potential community partners and investors.

Planning Area Characteristics

The Huebner/Leon Creeks Community is home to nearly 16,000 residents according to the 2000 Census (see Appendix A: Planning Area Demographics). This number represents a 15 percent increase in population from the 1990 Census data but is a significantly slower rate of growth than the 145 percent increase experienced in this area between 1980 and 1990.

According to the 2000 Census, planning area residents are 37 percent Hispanic, 52 percent Anglo, 4 percent African-American and 6 percent other races and ethnicities. Since the 1980 Census, all races and ethnicities have experienced an increase in total numbers.

The 2000 median household income of \$57,880 is considerably higher than the citywide median income of \$36,214. According to the Census, the median home value in the planning area was \$104,620 which is also higher than the citywide median of \$68,800.

The development of the planning area's neighborhoods began in the eastern portion of the planning area in 1934 with the Alamo Farmstead plat (see Appendix B: Community History). Much of this area has been subsequently replatted into conventional subdivisions and planned unit developments. The Alamo Farmsteads area was annexed by the City of San Antonio in 1972. The areas west of Leon Creek, Marshall Meadows, and the Westchase area were annexed in 1985. Nearly 7,000 dwelling units were added to the planning area between 1980 and 1990. The northwest corner of the plan area, including the Verde Hills Neighborhood, was annexed in 1993.

Currently, commercial development in the planning area is limited to the major thoroughfares along the periphery and is concentrated at major intersections.



Alamo Farmsteads house



Lochwood Estates house

Huebner/Leon Creeks Community Plan

After the dramatic growth experienced in the 1980s the area has begun to experience some growing pains. Streets and drainage infrastructure have not been upgraded in many areas and crowding has caused the Northside Independent School District to embark upon a major bond program to add classroom space and construct new facilities.

Getting Started

The Huebner/Leon Creeks Community neighborhoods successfully submitted an application to request the Planning Department's assistance in developing a community plan in 2001. In June 2002, the Planning Department began meeting with the Planning Team to develop a Memorandum of Understanding. The Planning Team (see Acknowledgements for a listing) is composed of representatives of planning area neighborhoods and organizations. An initial team was proposed in the application and updated after selection. The Memorandum of Understanding outlined the responsibilities of the Planning Team and the Planning Department for the planning process.

Community-Based Process

The Huebner/Leon Creeks Community Plan was developed following the guidelines set out in the *Community Building and Neighborhood Planning Program*, adopted by City Council in October 1998 and further specified in Article IV of the *Unified Development Code* adopted in 2001.



Volunteers work the sign in table at a community meeting

Two community meetings were held in July 2002 to give participants an opportunity to talk about the planning area's strengths and weaknesses. Community stakeholders, including neighbors, business owners, neighborhood association representatives, religious institution members, school officials and other interested groups, were invited to attend all events and offer their input throughout the planning process.

Between July and November the Planning Team met several times to review the input provided by the community and plan for subsequent meetings. Outreach to additional community stakeholders was also coordinated.

In November, a Plan Writing Conference was held to draft the majority of the plan. Participants divided into three groups: the Heart of the Neighborhood Work Group, the Getting Around Town Work Group, and the Places Where We Play, Gather and Learn Work Group. Each group met all day, developing goals and action steps for improving the community. The groups worked closely with the “consulting experts” in attendance to develop action steps that can be achieved and implemented feasibly. (see Acknowledgements or Appendix C: Resource Directory for a listing). The draft plan resulting from the Plan Writing Conference was reviewed by the Planning Team in December.



Some participants at the Plan Writing Conference

In February 2003, a Land Use Workshop was held to develop the land use plan for the area. The draft plan also was presented at a business community meeting held in April 2003.

During April 2003, relevant City departments had an opportunity to review the plan for consistency with City policies. The agencies proposed as lead partners or partnerships also were asked to review and support the goals and actions found in the plan.



Commercial property owners review the Plan at the Business Meeting

A final draft of the plan was presented at a community meeting in May. With requested changes included, the plan was presented to the Planning Commission and City Council for consideration. An Open House Celebration will follow plan adoption.

Community Outreach

The Planning Department, together with the partnering neighborhoods and the Office of Councilman Julian Castro, worked to encourage participation in the community planning process. The mailing list included over 8,000 neighborhood association members, business owners, owners of commercial and vacant properties, and meeting attendees. In addition, each neighborhood association published the meeting dates in their newsletters, Planning Task Force members hung posters at area businesses and volunteers requested meeting announcements in area religious institutions' newsletters.

Huebner/Leon Creeks Community Plan

For each of the community meetings, excluding the November Plan Writing Conference, hundreds of flyers were provided for distribution by the neighborhoods. Press releases also were sent to the *San Antonio Express News*.

Recognition by the City of San Antonio

After a review by City departments and a final community meeting, the Huebner/Leon Community Plan was forwarded to the Planning Commission for consideration. The Planning Commission reviews the document to ensure the Community Plan was created through an inclusive process, is consistent with City policies and accurately reflects the community's values.



State Representative Joaquin Castro discussed the importance of neighborhood planning at the Plan Writing Conference

After Planning Commission consideration, the plan was forwarded to the City Council for adoption as a component of the City's Comprehensive Master Plan. An approved plan is used by City departments, boards and commissions as a guide for decision making. Key projects may be selected from the plan to be included in the Annual Improvement Project Report. The report is provided to City Council as a part of the budget process.

Consistency with Other Plans

The Huebner/Leon Creeks Community Plan is consistent with the ideas found in the *1997 Master Plan*, the *1978 Major Thoroughfare Plan* and the *1999 Parks System Plan*.

The plan also is supported by the following Master Plan goal:

Neighborhoods, Goal 2: Strengthen the use of the Neighborhood Planning Process and neighborhood plans.

Plan Contents

The Plan Summary Chapter reviews the community's goals and objectives for neighborhood improvement. This chapter and the following three chapters, Heart of the Neighborhood, Getting Around Town, and Places Where We Play, Gather and Learn, include goals, objectives, action steps, lead partners, proposed partnerships and potential funding sources to achieve the community's desired vision. The Taking Action

Chapter describes the implementation steps the community will undertake to ensure the plan's vision becomes a reality.

Lead partners are the groups who have volunteered to begin the work of developing the partnerships necessary to implement the action steps. An initial listing of the partnering groups is included under proposed partnerships. The community also identified potential funding sources for the plan's action steps. The lead partner, together with the other partners, could approach these funding sources once the work of coordination is underway.

The Measuring Our Success Chapter describes the indicators the community will use to judge progress toward the plan goals. Finally, the appendices contain background and resource material for the plan.

Huebner/Leon Creeks Community Plan